DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 272 740 CE 044 862

AUTHOR Cuellar, Sylvia
TITLE Creating a Classroom Newsletter. From Theory to Practice.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 5p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Journal Articles (080)
JOURNAL CIT Adult Literacy and Basic Education; v9 n2 insert 1985

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; *Newsletters; *School Newspapers; Student Projects; *Student Publications; *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

A weekly classroom newsletter produced jointly by students and teachers is a practical way of involving adult basic education (ABE) students in writing activities while simultaneously increasing each student's ownership of the class. Such newsletters benefit ABE programs by incorporating the following recognized principles of adult education: ABE students want to read a variety of functional materials; adults learn best in a psychological climate in which they feel accepted, respected, and supported; adults enter into educational undertakings with a great accumulation of different kinds of experiences; and adults want and need a learner centered curriculum. Included among the things about which students could be asked to write are the following: the services provided by a local service agency, profiles of themselves for inclusion in a special "class spotlight" section, personal experiences, coming events, and special interest news. Clipped art, anecdotes, or jokes may be added to fill blank spaces. (This article includes a sample newsletter that was produced by the teacher and students in an ABE class in El Paso, Texas.) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED272740

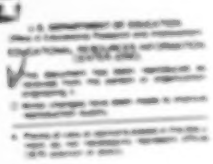
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G Conti

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ADULT LITERACY and BASIC EDUCATION
Volume 9, Number 2, 1985

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE



CREATING A CLASSROOM NEWSLETTER

Sylvia Cuellar

Introduction

Adult education research and literature state that (a) adult basic education (ABE) students want to read a variety of functional materials; (b) adults learn best in a psychological climate in which they feel accepted, respected, and supported and in which there exists a spirit of joint inquiry with the teacher; (c) adults enter into educational undertakings with a great accumulation of different kinds of experiences; and (d) the curriculum should be learner-centered. All of these principles may be incorporated into a weekly newsletter which the students and teacher jointly produce.

Putting It Together

Functional material. Students are assigned to write about a local service agency with which they are familiar. Information given may include agency name, address, phone number, services provided, contact person, and helpful insights gained through the student's experiences with the agency. Each week one agency is written up in the newsletter under a heading such as "News You Can Use."

Experience. Students are asked to write a short story with a different theme each week. Topics may include such items as "The Funniest Thing That Happened to Me" or "Important Things in My Life." After the teacher reads and discusses each story with its student-author, one is selected for publication in the newsletter. A variety of methods can be used for this selection. The teacher may choose the story, or a group of students appointed to the "editorial board" may screen the stories and

---

SYLVIA CUELLAR is a vocational education instructor for the handicapped with the El Paso Public Schools, El Paso, Texas.

CE 044 '86 2

select one. This feature of the newsletter could also be combined with the language experience technique. Using this technique, groups of students could generate stories based on their experiences for the newsletter. A story from a different group could be used in each newsletter.

Class spotlight. An excellent way to build a student's self-esteem is to spotlight one student in each newsletter. A name is picked out of hat, and that person is interviewed by the class. Questions are asked such as (a) where were you born, (b) what do you enjoy doing in your spare time, and (c) do you have any children. After the interview the students make positive comments about the student. These comments may either be expressed orally or be written on index cards. All of this information can be used to write an article for the newsletter. For an added touch of eye appeal and interest, a silhouette or photograph of the student may be included.

Coming events. Students are asked to bring to the attention of the class local events that are in the making. Items such as church bazaars, voter registration drives, and trade shows may be mentioned in the newsletter. The students should be reminded that this is *their* newsletter and that they may include any items that are of interest to them. As with the interviews, this information may be contributed in either oral or written form. Additional writing experience and responsibility can be gained by assigning one student or a small group of students to be in charge of getting this information from their classmates and of writing it in final form.

Special interest news. Students may want to include in their newsletter items such as special recognition for a student receiving an award, the birth of a child, or a student's promotion on the job. GED test dates and successful results could be announced here.

Conclusion

A classroom newsletter is a practical way to involve students in writing activities while simultaneously increasing each student's ownership of the class. Numerous topics of interest to the students can be included and esteem-building articles on individual students can be featured. To make the newsletter fun and enjoyable to read, such things as clipped art, anecdotes, or jokes may be added to fill in any blank spaces. Needless to say, access to a word processor greatly facilitates the composing of the newsletter.

ABE SPEAKS

Vol. 7, No. 11 | El Paso, Texas | April 6, 1985

Coming Events

The El Paso Garden Clubs are sponsoring the annual flower show April 11-12 in Bassett Center. Every beginning gardener who wants to may enter. Admission is free.

The Humane Society of El Paso will hold is annual Rabies Clinic on Sunday, April 12, at the Animal Shelter which is located at 325 Shelter. All dog and cat owners are urged to make sure their animals are up to date on their vaccinations. This is an opportunity to take advantage of the reduced cost ($5.00).

Burro basketball will take place at the El Paso County Coliseum on Sunday, April 19. Teams from 93Z radio, Safeway stores, and the El Paso County Sheriff's Department will play in the benefit tournament.

The Sweet Adelines, El Paso Sungold Chapter, will perform at the Chamizal Theater on Saturday, April 18, at 3:30 p.m. The public is invited, and admission is free.

Congratulations, Julia

Julia Romero was awarded Employee of the Month at C&D Manufactures. She received this honor for her perfect attendance and for increasing her quota by 15%. Great job, Julia!

News You Can Use

The main Public Library is located at 501 Oregon. It is open Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. On Friday and Saturday the hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Besides books, the library loans pictures, cassettes, records, video cassettes, filmstrips, and slides. To get a library card El Paso residents must present identification and fill out an application. The librarians at the information counter have always been very helpful.

† Tseten Chung

ABE Spotlight

Robert Gomez

Robert grew up in Mexico, South Texas, and El Paso. He and his wife, Cynthia, have three teenage daughters. Robert is employed by the El Paso Public Schools in the transportation department. In his spare time he enjoys working on his '66 Mustang and playing his guitar. Robert's classmates enjoy his good humor and the enthusiasm that he brings to class.

It's A Small World

When I was 18, I went to live in Los Angles with my aunt & uncle. I had never left Juarez before, and I felt very out of place. But the second Sunday at church, I saw one of my school friends from Juarez. I learned that it is a small world after all.

† Lupe Roman